



FL 76 10/6/25

**The Parish of Medstead and Four Marks**  
**Minutes of the**  
**Annual Parochial Church Meeting**  
**Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2025, 7.30pm**  
**at the Church of the Good Shepherd**

**Present:** 48 persons were present  
**Apologies:** Apologies were received from 16 persons  
(see Appendix 1)

**1. Welcome and Introduction**

Howard thanked everyone for their presence at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. He expressed the regret of PCC that this APCM had needed to be postponed twice before necessary financial reports could be presented.

**2. Giving Thanks – Worship and Prayer**

Matt Senior led us in worship including a song celebrating the faithfulness of our God "Great is Thy Faithfulness". Howard and four other parishioners led us in prayer.

**3. The Election of Churchwardens (two posts)**

The wardens (David Duffin and Andy Walters) were thanked for their service since the SPCM that marked the joining on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 of the historic Parishes of St Andrew's Medstead and the Church of the Good Shepherd Four Marks. From mid-June until December, Peter George-Jones had replaced David Duffin as warden, and we are grateful for the special insights that he contributed during those early days of the merger.

Thanks also were given to Debra Barnes as Assistant Warden. She is willing to continue in that role. She together with Stephen Blackshaw and Ian Jurd had served St Andrew's well particularly at a time when both elected Churchwardens came from the COGS worshipping community. APCM agreed with Howard's proposal that all three should be recognised locally as Assistant Wardens of the Parish.

Nominations were received for Andy Walters (proposed by Jill Williams, seconded by Brian Stutley) and David Duffin (proposed by David Williams, seconded by Jane Hughes). There being no further nominations, Andy Walters and David Duffin were duly elected.

*We then moved from the Annual Meeting of Parishioners to elect Wardens (the Vestry Meeting) to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.*

**4. Presentation of Electoral Roll**

Frank Maloney, the acting Electoral Roll Officer, presented the 2025 Electoral Roll. This represented the complete revision of the Roll, as required every six years. As many members as could be contacted were asked about their continuing membership.

• Number on Roll –	193
○ Living in Ecclesiastical Parish –	155
○ Not living in Ecclesiastical Parish –	38
• Number of families represented –	67
○ Adult members in families –	133
• New members –	19
• Number removed –	69
○ Moved on, relocated or changed church –	26
○ No form returned –	43



As is common at major revisions, there was a significant number of former members who did not return their registration forms, others who had moved away or joined other churches. But there were also members added to both congregations.

## **5. Election of PCC members**

Howard explained that following the 2024 SPCM, eight newly elected PCC members were assigned by lot to either one-, two- or three-year terms. This meant that rather than electing a whole PCC after three years, we would have a rolling schedule of elections. That will give continuity to the membership of PCC. There had been one vacancy for an elected member since the beginning of the new PCC. Four representatives on Deanery Synod whose three-year terms all end in 2027 are also members of PCC.

Ian Trotter (proposed by Sharon Blackshaw, seconded by Jackie Jurd) and Bob Meekums (proposed by David Duffin, seconded by David Williams) were each willing to stand for re-election for a full three-year term after completing a one-year term. There being no further nominations, Bob Meekums and Ian Trotter were duly elected.

Peter and Tracey George-Jones had served the Parish as members of the new PCC. For a period until the end of 2024, Peter had held office as Warden with particular responsibility for St Andrew's. However, by the end of the year both he and Tracey had felt that they should step back from PCC. APCM placed on record its thanks to them both for their service.

There remain three vacancies on PCC. Howard asked members to consider offering to fill those vacancies, particularly as we are looking for a better-balanced representation from the two worshipping communities of the Parish.

## **6. The Annual Report and Accounts**

Howard introduced the annual report and reiterated that they were available both on paper and via the website.

Our accounting period is the calendar year. In October 2024 it looked as though we faced a deficit of around £55,000 on that year. By the time the accounts had been submitted and signed off by the present Independent Examiner it appeared that the deficit was about £9,000. Remarkably, after more recent analysis it is possible that we lost as little as £2,000 in 2024. The overspend is covered by reserves.

Much of the uncertainty has occurred through the complexity of the process of merging the accounts of the two former Parishes. Pressure of work meant that Claire had to resign the role of Treasurer in early summer, but we are thankful for the groundwork that she and our bookkeeper Tori laid.

For six months the Parish was without a Treasurer. We are so grateful that Chris Nunn accepted the invitation of PCC to become Treasurer in February 2025. He gave a brief overview of the current situation, showing how that the substantial proportion (72%) of our annual budget goes towards the mission of the Parish while the remainder (28%) covers general running costs – what he described as “keeping the lights on”. He also showed that for the period of 2025 for which data are available, we see:

- income at more than £12,000 ahead of budget,
- expenditure just less than £2,000 over budget.

(See Appendix 2)

Questions were raised from the floor of the meeting:

- Designated vs. Restricted Funds? PCC cannot vary the use of Restricted Funds from the purpose for which they were granted – except by negotiation with the donor. Designated Funds are general funds designated for a specific purpose by PCC; these can be repurposed by PCC if necessary.
- No mention of solar panels in the 2024 accounts? The costs of supplying and fitting were more than covered by Restricted donations made in 2025. The major donor agreed that any residue could go back into General Funds.
- Questions about the style of presentation of accounts to APCM. What has been presented to APCM was taken from the Annual Report designed according to Charity Commission requirements. It was



generally agreed that a more appropriate layout would better suit a presentation at an APCM. The Treasurer and PCC were asked to decide an appropriate format.

- A question was raised about the wide range of values that have been quoted for the final balance of income and expenditure for 2024. In October the end-of-year deficit had been predicted at over £50,000. This was later said to have been reduced to some £9,000. When the actual figures were given in the year-end accounts and approved by the Independent Examiner, as presented to APCM, they showed a surplus of £44,224. Why such a divergence? No explanation could be advanced at the meeting other than the difficulties we faced when without a Treasurer for six months. Now that Chris has that role he can investigate the matter.
- Situation with bank accounts? Conforming with new legislation has prolonged the process of opening a new Parish-wide account, still not complete. The old separate accounts are still open, but everyone who has used payments by standing order will need to set up a new arrangement before the old accounts are closed.

## **7. Appointment of Independent Examiner**

Some of the delay in calling the APCM was caused by late return of our accounts from the Independent Examiner. PCC at its next meeting will review our present arrangements with a view to getting our schedule back to what it should be (i.e. APCM before the end of April).

## **8. Presentations**

Jane and Virginia took the meeting through a summary of all the outreach happening to bring the Good News to children, parents and grandparents. A course encouraging "Parenting for Faith" is to be joined by "Grandparenting for Faith" later in the year. Various weekly and monthly activities take place throughout the year, and special annual events take place at Christmas and Easter. There are regular contacts in the two Parish primary schools and with local nurseries.

(See Appendix 3)

Many members of the meeting were clearly surprised and all encouraged by the range of activities and the substantial numbers of adults and children drawn to them. For example,

- a recent meeting of "Tots" drew 36 toddlers from 25 families;
- Messy Church usually welcomes over 50 children and parents and/or grandparents;
- Monday afternoon Youth Club numbers have grown from 2 to 12.

Jane and Virginia thanked all those who have stood with them in this work and asked for continued prayer. Their presentation drew applause from the meeting. Howard emphasized how important it is to the present life and future growth of the Parish and that we should continue to support our staff and all the volunteers who help them maintain this vital work.

Howard read from Hebrews 12:1-3

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*

He reminded everyone of God's goodness over the recorded 800-year ministry in St Andrew's, Medstead – to be celebrated on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> June, and the planting out from St Peter's Ropley of a chapel in Four Marks in 1908 leading to the building of COGS in 1953. We have a debt of gratitude to those who have gone before. We should also consider what should be our legacy, and the importance of our ministry to the coming generations. Let us run with perseverance.

## **9. Closing Prayer**

Howard closed the meeting with prayer and the dismissal:

Go in Peace to love and serve the Lord in the Name of Christ – Amen.